



Neighborhood Business Districts

Posted by **Pierluigi Oliverio** on Monday, May 28, 2007

Happy Memorial Day

The backbone of San Jose is made of its neighborhood business districts. District 6 has three viable ones: Lincoln Avenue, The Alameda and West San Carlos. These neighborhood business districts provide tax revenue for our city. In addition, they are a compliment to the residential neighborhoods they border.

The business districts in D-6 have had empty storefronts; however, those empty storefronts might be becoming something of the past. This past week, I attended one meeting and one grand opening of two small businesses owned by people who live in the area.

On May 23, I attended the opening of Powell's Sweet Shop on Lincoln Avenue. Powell's is a Northern Californian chain that started up in the North Bay. They sell vintage candy, gourmet chocolate and gelato. The store was packed with excited patrons who couldn't wait to unwrap the candies. Although it took a long time for Powell's candy store to move through the process, its new home is sure to attract an anxious crowd.

In addition, directly across the street from Powell's is the upcoming 3 Dog Café, a new concept restaurant from the creators of Aqui's. As many people know, Aqui's started on Lincoln Avenue and is owned by a gentleman who grew up in San Jose. I hope the process for 3 Dog Café is not backlogged. I will be tracking this process to make sure that the city departments charged with helping small businesses actually provide assistance. Willow Glen residents want more neighborhood-friendly businesses on Lincoln Avenue; therefore, I do not want to hold up private investment in our neighborhood business district.

I also attended a community meeting this week for a new business on The Alameda, Wine Affairs, which will locate on the same block as the Towne Theater. The woman opening the business formerly worked in high-tech.

Now she is pursuing her dream to open a wine bar that serves desserts and also offers classes. Her target audience is the nearby neighborhood.

City staff, neighborhood and business leaders and various community members attended the Wine Affairs meeting. Usually at these meetings there is disagreement, especially with alcohol being served. However, no one in the room disagreed. Everyone was happy and delighted with the proposed business.

One member of the audience asked how much money was needed to start a business like this. He was told that the start-up costs were over a quarter of a million dollars. I am glad the question was asked. I am not sure if folks understand what a financial commitment small business owners make when they open a business.

These enterprises chose to locate in these areas because they wanted a central business district feel. They also appreciate the neighborhoods in which the business districts are located. The city needs to continue to provide infrastructure for these areas like pedestrian safety, slowing cars down, trees, benches, bike racks, lighting, etc....

What are your ideas for neighborhood business districts San Jose?

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